IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An electronic equipment having parts ~~which~~ that may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

a setting part ~~which~~ that is set with ~~a predetermined~~ the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

~~an authenticating part~~ a processor configured to authenticate a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

a changing part configured to temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting part, in response to a change instruction, when said processor ~~authenticating part~~ authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

2. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said setting part is preset [[wit]] with a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

3. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ~~authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the maintenance-attending person.

4. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said changing part adds a maintenance range specified by the change instruction only for a period of time specified by the change instruction, with respect to the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting part.

5. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said setting part is also set with a predetermined management range in which management is permitted, and

said changing part also temporarily changes the predetermined management range set in said setting part, in response to the change instruction, when said ~~authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

6. (Currently Amended) The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

an input part <u>configured</u> to permit input of the change instruction by an operator whose validity is authenticated.

7. (Currently Amended) An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment ~~which~~ that includes a setting part which is set with a ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, a first authenticating part to authenticate <u>a</u> validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part to temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

a ~~second authenticating part~~ <u>processor configured</u> to authenticate <u>a</u> validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus;

an input part <u>configured</u> to permit input of the change instruction <u>for changing the maintenance range</u> when the ~~second authenticating part~~ <u>processor</u> authenticates the validity of

3

the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

a part configured to supply the change instruction input from said input part to the electronic equipment.

8. (Currently Amended) The equipment managing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said ~~second authenticating part~~ processor authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

9. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

a setting part configured to set in advance [[a]] the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

a ~~first authenticating part~~ processor configured to authenticate a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

a changing part configured to temporarily change the set maintenance range to a ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said processor ~~first authenticating part~~, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

10. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said setting part is provided within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

11. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said changing part is provided within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that

provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

12. (Original) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein

said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service

provider, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

13. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim

11, wherein

said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service

provider, or[[,]] provided within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

14. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9,

further comprising:

a second authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of an operator of

said changing part.

15. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim

14, wherein said second authenticating part authenticates the validity of the operator using an

authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

16. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said <u>processor</u> first authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-

attending person using an authenticating medium which <u>that</u> stores authentication information

of a maintenance person.

17. (Original) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

said setting part sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

18. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9,

further comprising:

a maintenance part <u>configured</u> to perform <u>the</u> maintenance of the equipment within

the predetermined <u>changed</u> maintenance range.

19. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim

18, wherein

said maintenance part is provided in an apparatus within a maintenance service

provider which <u>that</u> provides maintenance services for the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform

remote maintenance of the equipment.

20. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim

18, wherein

said maintenance part is provided within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment,

or[[,]] within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

21. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

22. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising the steps of:

(a) setting in advance [[a]] the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

(b) authenticating a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

(c) temporarily changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a predetermined changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said step (b), so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the predetermined changed maintenance range.

23. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (a) is performed within a maintenance service provider which that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

24. (Currently Amended) The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (c) is carried out within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or[[,]] within a setup site of the equipment.

25. (Original) The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step (c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

26. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step (c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider or[[,]] ~~provided~~ within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

27. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:
(d) authenticating a validity of an operator of said changing [[part]].

28. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 27, wherein said step (d) authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of the operator.

29. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (b) authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using

an authenticating medium ~~which~~ that stores authentication information of a maintenance person.

30. (Original) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step (a) sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

31. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

(e) carrying out maintenance of the equipment within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.

32. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said step (e) is carried out in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider ~~which~~ that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment.

33. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said step (e) is carried out within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or[[,]] within the equipment, and

said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

34. (Currently Amended) The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

35. (Currently Amended) An electronic equipment having parts which that may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

setting means set with a predetermined for storing the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

authenticating means for authenticating a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

changing means for temporarily changing the predetermined maintenance range [[set]] stored in said setting means, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

36. (Currently Amended) An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment which includes setting means set with for storing a predetermined maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, first authenticating means for authenticating a validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and changing means for temporarily changing the predetermined maintenance range [[set]] stored in the setting [[part]] means in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

second authenticating means for authenticating a validity of an operator of the

equipment managing apparatus;

input means for permitting input of the change instruction for temporarily changing

the maintenance range when the second authenticating means authenticates the validity of the

operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic

equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

means for supplying the change instruction input from said input means to the

electronic equipment.

37. (Currently Amended) An equipment maintenance system for controlling a

maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

setting means for setting in advance [[a]] the maintenance range in which the

maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

authenticating means for authenticating a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending

person for the equipment; and

changing means for temporarily changing the set maintenance range to a changed

predetermined maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating

means, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed

predetermined maintenance range.

38. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores

including a program, for causing a wherein the program, when executed by a computer,

causes the computer to set to perform a method for setting a maintenance range which that

specifies parts of an electronic equipment which that may be subjected to maintenance, said

program method comprising:

[[a]] setting ~~procedure causing the computer to be set with a predetermined~~ the

maintenance range in which the maintenance <u>of the electronic equipment by a maintenance-</u>

<u>attending person</u> is permitted;

[[an]] authenticating ~~procedure causing the computer to authenticate~~ <u>a</u> validity of [[a]]

<u>the</u> maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and

[[a]] changing ~~procedure causing the computer to~~ temporarily ~~change~~ the

~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in said setting ~~procedure~~, in response to a change

instruction, when said authenticating ~~procedure~~ authenticates the validity of the

maintenance-attending person.

39. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which stores~~

<u>including</u> a program<u>, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the</u> ~~for~~

~~causing a~~ computer to ~~manage~~ <u>perform a method for managing</u> an electronic equipment

~~which~~ <u>that</u> includes a setting part set with a ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range in which

maintenance is permitted, an authenticating part <u>configured</u> to authenticate <u>a</u> validity of a

maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part <u>configured</u> to

temporarily change the ~~predetermined~~ maintenance range set in the setting part in response to

a change instruction when the authenticating part authenticates the validity of the

maintenance-attending person, said ~~program~~ <u>method</u> comprising:

[[an]] authenticating ~~procedure causing the computer to authenticate~~ <u>a</u> validity of an

operator of the computer;

~~an input procedure causing the computer to permit input of~~ <u>inputting</u> the change

instruction <u>for temporarily changing the maintenance range</u> when the authenticating

~~procedure~~ authenticates the validity of the operator<u>, the maintenance range being a range in</u>

which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

~~a procedure causing the computer to supply~~ supplying the change instruction input by said ~~input procedure~~ inputting to the electronic equipment.

40. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium ~~which stores~~ including a program, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the ~~for causing a~~ computer to ~~control~~ perform a method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, said ~~program~~ method comprising:

[[a]] setting ~~procedure causing the computer to set~~ in advance [[a]] the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

[[an]] authenticating ~~procedure causing the computer to authenticate~~ a validity of [[a]] the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

[[a]] changing ~~procedure causing the computer to~~ temporarily ~~change~~ the set maintenance range to a ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating ~~procedure~~, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the ~~predetermined~~ changed maintenance range.